

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 02116 081611Z
ACTION EUR-12

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UNCLAS ATHENS 2116

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, XX, GR
SUBJECT: COMMERCIAL PROGRAM: FOREIGN BUYER PROGRAM

REF: (A) STATE 45849, (B) ATHENS 1248, (C) 76 ATHENS 150

1. EMBASSY REGRETS APPARENT DECISION TO CURTAIL FOREIGN BUYER PROGRAM, WHICH EXPERIENCE HERE HAS SHOWN TO BE ONE OF MOST EFFECTIVE COMMERCE PROMOTION TOOLS, BOTH FOR BUYER VISITS TO COMMERCE-DESIGNATED TRADE SHOWS AND INDIVIDUAL TRAVEL BY SERIOUS GREEK BUSINESSMEN. TYPICAL OF SUCCESS OF PROGRAM IS STRONG RESPONSE FROM GREEK BUYER MISSION TO FEBRUARY 14-17 CHICAGO AIR CONDITIONING/HEATING/REFRIGERATION EXPOSITION (REF B). ON RETURN TO ATHENS, GREEK MISSION HELD PRESS CONFERENCE CARRIED IN MAJOR ECONOMIC DAILIES OF MARCH 1 DETAILING SUCCESS OF CHICAGO SHOW AND PROSPECTS FOR RESULTING JOINT VENTURES, LICENSING AGREEMENTS, AND REPRESENTATION IN GREECE. SIMILARLY, WE HAVE HAD EXCELLENT REPORTS FROM MAJORITY OF INDIVIDUAL RETURNEES WHO WERE ASSISTED UNDER FOREIGN BUYER PROGRAM

2. PROMOTION OF GROUP TRAVEL UNDER FOREIGN BUYER PROGRAM TO DESIGNATED U.S. TRADE SHOWS IS INCLUDED UNDER ACTIONS PLANNED FOR SPECIFIC CAMPAIGNS IN FY 1977 CAP FOR GREECE (REF C). CURTAILMENT OF FBP WILL RESTRICT THIS MEANS OF MEETING PROGRAM
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OBJECTIVES. WHILE LIMITED POST RESOURCES DEVOTED TO FBP PROMOTION CAN BE EASILY DIVERTED TO OTHER AREAS, WE BELIEVE THAT REDUCTION OF PROGRAM WILL LIMIT POST EFFECTIVENESS IN ENCOURAGING BUSINESS TRAVEL TO US.
MILLS

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